

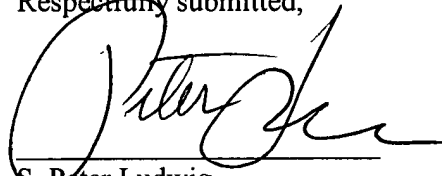
REMARKS

This application contains claims 1-40. Claims 12-19, 31-38 and 40 are allowed. Claims 1-11, 20-30 and 39 have been canceled without prejudice. Reconsideration is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-4, 6, 7, 9-11, 20-23, 25, 26, 28-30 and 39 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) over Scott (U.S. Patent 6,339,481), while claims 5, 8, 24 and 27 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) over Scott taken alone or in combination with Endo (U.S. Patent 6,381,038). While disagreeing with the grounds of rejection, Applicant has canceled claims 1-11, 20-30 and 39 in order to expedite issuance of a patent on the allowed claims. Applicant will prosecute the subject matter of the rejected claims in a continuation of this application.

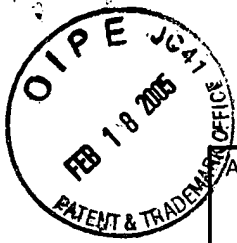
Applicant believes the amendments and remarks presented hereinabove to be fully responsive to all of the grounds of rejection raised by the Examiner. In view of these amendments and remarks, Applicant respectfully submits that all of the claims in the present application are in order for allowance. Prompt notice to this effect is hereby requested.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "S. Peter Ludwig", is written over a horizontal line.

S. Peter Ludwig
Registration No. 25,351
Attorney for Applicant

Darby & Darby P.C.
P.O. Box 5257
New York, NY 10150-5257
(212) 527-7700



Application No. (if known): 09/653,181

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Amendment (6 pages)
Amendment Transmittal (1 page)